



What is the Governor's Committee?

The Committee is composed of twelve members who are appointed by the Governor, at least seven of whom must be persons with disabilities. The Committee is supported by a staff of five state employees. Officials from various Texas state agencies serve as advisory ex-officio members.

What does the Committee do?

The Committee and staff serve as subject matter sources of information on the abilities, rights, problems, and needs of Texans with disabilities. They advise the Governor and the state legislature on issues related to Texans with disabilities. Although the Committee does not have enforcement legislation linked to its enabling statute in the Texas Human Resources Code, Chapter 115, it develops policy recommendations based on citizen input and research.

Does the Committee work with local communities and organizations?

The Committee develops statewide networks of volunteer community-level committees to help promote dissemination of information and to support the rights of Texans with disabilities. It provides information and technical assistance to public and private agencies and businesses to promote and facilitate disability rights laws.

What are the APA/GCPD Accessibility Awards?

Since 2010, the Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities (GCPD) has worked with the Accessibility Professionals Association (APA) to recognize businesses and organizations that go significantly above and beyond the legal requirements of both physical and service accessibility for people with disabilities.

Nominations can be submitted by design professionals, construction teams, accessibility specialists, building owners or managers, or by appreciative public citizens. Submissions are due September 30 each year. A small submission fee covers the cost of the site visit. To be eligible for the award, the site must have been originally inspected by a member of APA.

Site visits are made by APA professionals to inspect innovative physical accessibility design features, and by people familiar with disability issues to look for innovative service accessibility accommodations.

The Governor's Committee has created an ***Above and Beyond: Service Accessibility*** document to give site owners creative ideas for ensuring a welcoming and inclusive environment for ALL people and to help make their business or service stand out. The document is available in various formats from GCPD upon request.

Selection and Presentation of the

APA/GCPD ACCESSIBILITY AWARDS

Winners of the APA/GCPD Accessibility Award are selected in several different general categories, including Recreation, Education, Medical and Health Services, Restaurant, Entertainment, and others.

Site visits to nominated businesses and organizations are conducted by one or more members of the Accessibility Professionals Association to evaluate physical accessibility and by a team of people with disabilities and professionals in the field of disabilities to evaluate the site's service accessibility. Based on detailed reports from both of the teams, representatives from APA and GCPD collectively choose the winners.

Each year, the selected winners are recognized at a ceremony conducted as part of APA's Annual Conference in January.

Submission Guidelines and Entry Forms can be found on the APA/GCPD Accessibility Awards website, along with information on previous winners.

http://gov.texas.gov/disabilities/awards/apa_gcpd_accessibility_awards